

Area-Based Policy Options

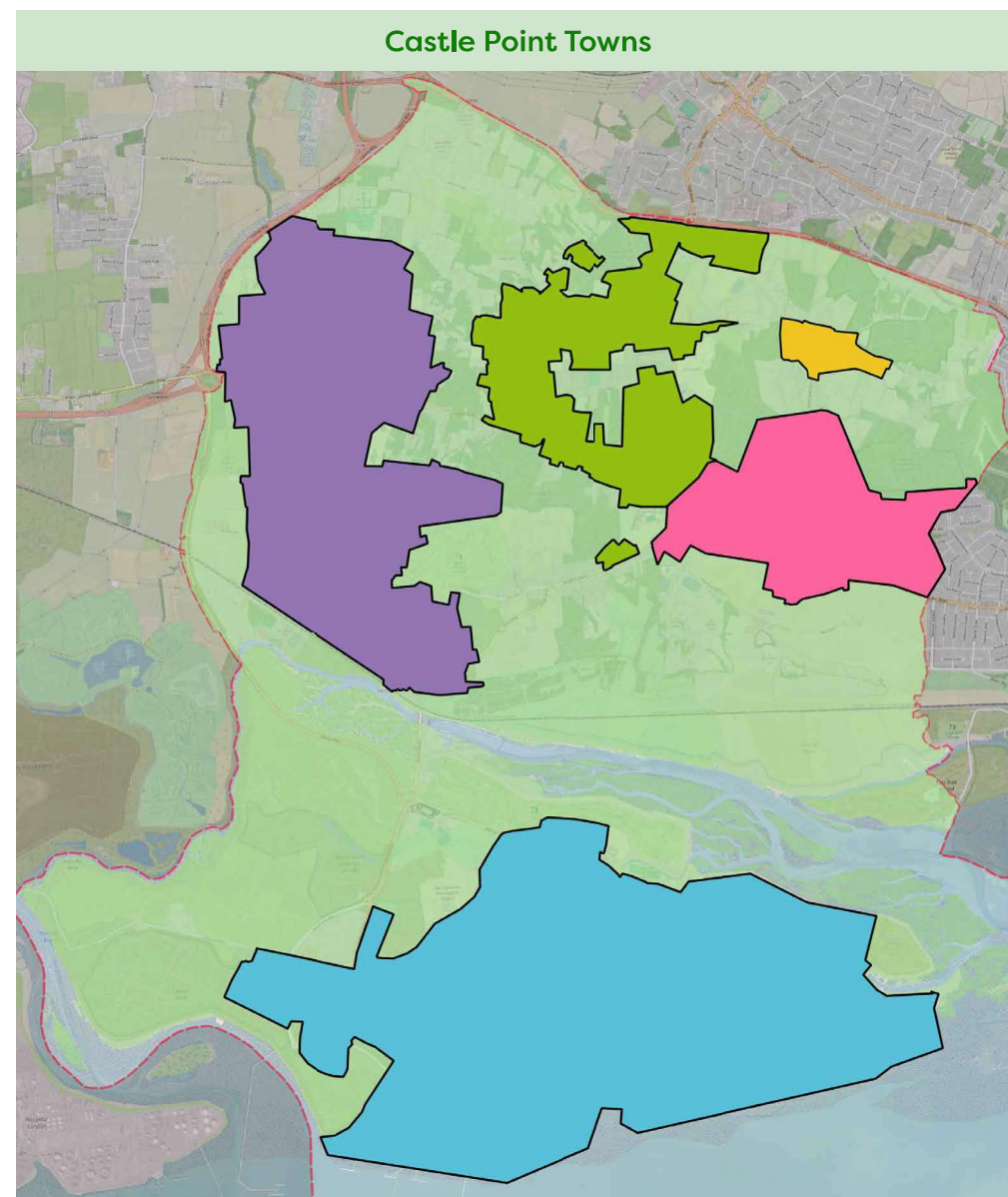
Castle Point is formed of four towns: **Canvey**, **Benfleet**, **Hadleigh** and **Thundersley**, as well as the village of **Daws Heath**. Each of these areas are distinct from each other, and generally surrounded by Green Belt. The exception to this is Hadleigh, which is contiguous with Thundersley and the Southend conurbation to the east.

The Council is seeking to produce a plan which delivers the vision for the borough but is rooted in the unique characteristics of the individual towns and village that make up the borough. This means that the approach to development and change in the Castle Point Plan will be one of place-making and may well vary by area as it responds to each area's unique characteristics, challenges and opportunities.

The Council is pursuing an urban-first approach to allocating possible development sites in the Castle Point Plan. This means prioritising the development of brownfield sites to protect, so far as possible, the borough's green spaces for their rich biodiversity, habitat, and leisure value for future generations to enjoy.

This means directing development into the borough's urban areas. The benefits of regenerating land in urban areas extends far beyond simply providing new homes for local residents. Urban developments offer opportunities to produce new and improved spaces for local businesses, and service providers, improve the co-location of important facilities to make it easier to complete multiple jobs on a single visit to a local town centre, and fund improvements to the town centre's streets and spaces.

This chapter introduces the issues relevant to each area, and discusses how they may be addressed through the Castle Point Plan. It is these area-based sections that will form the basis of the draft Castle Point Plan, and will form the basis of the overall Development Strategy for the borough.



Map Key:

	Castle Point Borough Boundary		Thundersley		Hadleigh		Green Belt
	Benfleet		Daws Heath		Canvey Island		

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Potential Development Sites within the Area-Based Approaches

The following sections include potential development sites that may have capacity to accommodate growth in the plan period (2023 – 2043). These sites are set out by town (and village), with most being within “clusters” which may have the opportunity to act together to produce shared local benefits.

The sites identified are at present generally low-density brownfield sites, which could be extended or redeveloped to bring investment into the borough, creating new homes alongside improved services and employment opportunities.

The sites listed below have been identified through the Call for Sites process, and in a Draft Urban Capacity Study.

- **The Call for Sites invited landowners to submit sites for consideration in the preparation of the Castle Point Plan.**
- **The Urban Capacity Study sought to identify any additional under-utilised sites that may be suitable for development within the urban area.**

Together these processes establish what land may be available for future development in the borough. The Council has sought to ensure that “no stone is left unturned”, in exploring opportunities to accommodate as much of the borough’s development need as possible within the existing urban area.

It is important to understand that at this time these sites are identified as potential sources of urban development only. They are not allocations for development at this stage. They are identified to clearly set out the types of choices that need to be made, and so that these choices can be considered alongside options for growth outside of the urban area. Put simply, the more development opportunities that are identified on urban sites, the lower the risk is to our borough’s precious Green Belt areas.

All the sites identified are considered to have the potential to be more intensively used, but the Council has not at this point determined which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan. These choices will be

taken once consultation feedback has been received and analysed. **It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.** This means sites will very likely be added to or excluded from the draft Castle Point Plan following consultation.

As a part of this consultation, the Council is re-opening the Call for Sites process so that additional land can be promoted for development, with the aim of understanding as fully as possible what land is available, and appropriate for inclusion in the draft Castle Point Plan.

It is important that we establish as fully as possible what land is available for development, in order to demonstrate to the Government that we have considered all reasonable choices available to us in arriving at a draft Castle Point Plan in January 2025.



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Daws Heath

Key points that came out from the initial engagement on Daws Heath were:

- Residents consider Daws Heath to be a semi-rural village. Respondents feel it is vitally important that the green spaces and ancient woodland remain, as they provide a natural green ring that protects Daws Heath's character.
- The ancient woodland in this area acts as an important green lung and contributes to mitigating air quality impacts stemming from the A127 corridor.
- The woodland and green open spaces house an abundance of varying wildlife, and a continuous wildlife corridor between Belfairs Great Wood and West Wood was suggested to create and connect habitats and development should be steered away from this area.
- Local roads are used as a cut through to and from the A127, linked to congestion at the Woodmans Arms junction.
- The Deanes School is at capacity and cannot extend further for its catchment area.
- The shop in Daws Heath Road near the junction with Western Road is very valuable to local residents.

Challenges & Opportunities in Daws Heath

The Green Belt is tightly defined around Daws Heath and there are very limited opportunities for development and change within the village. Community participation and activity is however strong within the village.

The quality of the Green Belt in this location is high, comprising meadows, woodlands and some ancient woodland. Some elements of this landscape are managed for wildlife purposes and there is a good level of public access in parts. There is the potential to extend opportunities for wildlife habitat and recreational access around Daws Heath to improve connectivity between West Wood, the Haven Complex to the north, and Great Wood, Dodds Grove and Belfairs Wood to the east.

Transport improvements within Daws Heath could include:

- Additional pedestrian crossings of Rayleigh Road and Western Road
- Introduce further cycle routes east/north along New Road/ Daws Heath Road to provide additional access to Belfairs Nature Reserve and West Wood
- Increased frequency of the number 3 bus from 120 minutes to 60 minutes

Q34. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed in Daws Heath within the Castle Point Plan?



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.

Unclustered Sites in Daws Heath

The following sites may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
320	20 Haresland Close, Daws Heath	Potential for 25 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q35. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Daws Heath?



Map Key:

- Urban Sites
- Green Belt

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